

# Afghanistan

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Project Report

in support of the Afghanistan Project

CASH FOR FOOD REPORT

Fourth Phase 1987 - Target area - Northeast

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CASH FOR FOOD PROGRAMME - FOURTH PHASE 1987 - TARGET AREA - NORTHEAST

Summary

- 1) The fourth phase of Afghanistan's Cash-for-Food programme for displaced civilians inside Afghanistan was successfully completed in August and September 1987. The money to buy food was escorted into Afghanistan by two European monitors and was handed over to the administration of the target area. The target area has now expanded to include a new northern area and a survey of the number of destitute civilians in this area is now being carried out.
- 11) The monitors obtained receipts from the commander of the target area and from a senior representative of the refugee committee. It was arranged that the rest of the receipts would be sent out by the administration as soon as possible.
- 111) The monitors discussed with the administration the needs and situation of the civilian population and the possibilities for simple development aid.
- 1v) The monitors then carried out an extensive survey of civilian living conditions and a spot-check to test that the previous allocations of Cash-for-Food had been received by those in need. They also sought the views of the civilian population on the development aid proposals suggested by the administration.
- v) During their stay in the area, the monitors found the situation of the civilian population had changed from the year before. There had been a further influx of civilians from areas of military activity to the safer areas, fuel continued to be in short supply, but the food

situation had improved a little as more marginal land was being cultivated, and there had been less aerial bombardment.

vi) Afghanaid's conclusions are that there is a continuing need for a Cash-for-Food programme in the expanded target area, that the present methodology seems right, and that the programme should now be expanded to include simple development aid, particularly in the agricultural field.

CASH FOR FOOD PROGRAMME - FOURTH PHASE - TARGET AREA - NORTHEAST

A. Introduction

1. This report covers the fourth phase of Afghanistan's emergency Cash-for-Food programme for displaced civilians in an area of north-east Afghanistan, which was carried out in the summer of 1987.

2. The fourth phase followed three previous phases: in the summer of 1985; in the winter of 1985/86; and in the late summer of 1986 (see previous reports).

B. Aims of the Cash-for-Food Programme

- 1) To supply civilians who have fled from the war zones and taken refuge inside Afghanistan with the means to buy food, so that they can maintain themselves in Afghanistan and avoid adding to the number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan;
- 2) With a view to the future of Afghanistan after the war, to strengthen the existing local Afghan administrative system by working with and through it;
- 3) To maintain in this way a distribution network in the areas concerned capable of handling further Cash-for-Food or other aid;

- 4) To maintain a level of accountability acceptable to donors.

C. Objectives of the fourth phase in north-east Afghanistan

- 1) To use the bulk of ODA's grant of £250,000 to make a further substantial input of Cash-for-Food into this same area ("the original target area") as well as into a new area to the north ("the northern area"), which has now come under the administration of the original target area. The northern area is estimated to contain 64,000 destitute civilians; this is in addition to the 70,000 destitute civilians known to be living in the original target area.
- 2) To send British monitors with the money into the target area to ensure its delivery to the administration area and to carry out a check that the previous tranche of Cash-for-Food had been properly distributed.
- 3) To use the British monitors to carry out a survey of the original target area and the new northern area with a view to assessing the needs of civilians in these areas and the scope for further assistance programmes to supplement the Cash-for-Food Programme.

D. Narrative

Due to Afghanistan's increasing experience and improved organisation, the monitoring team only needed to spend a few days in Pakistan before setting off for the Afghan border. The team consisted of two British monitors, one of whom had set up the Cash-for-Food programme in 1985 and had followed it up in 1986, and the other who was his assistant in 1986. They were accompanied by two very experienced Afghan guides, one of whom could speak excellent English and had accompanied the team in 1986.

The team crossed the border, with the Cash-for-Food money (Af\$ 34,000,000 or approximately £133,600) and an armed escort, on August 8th. After thirteen days walking, they reached the target area on August 21st. There they handed over the money and obtained a receipt from a senior representative of the refugee committee of the administration. The team then had to move on quickly due to the threat of an enemy commando attack (which in the event did not take place). They travelled northwards to meet the overall commander of the region, who also provided a receipt for the money. After three days of discussion with him, they travelled in a wide circle through the northern area and the original target area. During this journey, from August 24th to September 3rd, they carried out a survey of the displaced and settled civilians, and ran spot-checks on the previous distributions of Cash-for-Food in 1985 and 1986.

*How do they know the \$ went to the recipients?*

The monitors left the target area on September 8th and crossed the Pakistan border on September 18th.

E. Discussions with the Administration

The monitors held discussions with the area commander, his political spokesman and representatives of the refugee committee. They covered past, present and future Cash-for-Food programmes; the needs of the displaced and settled civilians; and the possibilities for development aid.

According to the administration, Afghanaid's well established Cash-for-Food programme has been of major benefit to their civilians in need, enabling them to stay in the area and avoid the arduous journey to Pakistan. They urged the need for a larger input of aid. According to them, the total Cash-for-Food aid given last year by all the PVOs would only have provided the families in need for about two months. However, this was enough to allow the civilians to stay in the area, though living at this level of subsistence was difficult especially in the winter when food was scarce and expensive.

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The administration were concerned that it was difficult for them to plan their distribution due to the uncertainty about and the late arrival of the Cash-for-Food; this was the case in 1986. The monitors explained that Afghanaid had been pressing for an early delivery of funds, both in 1986 and 1987, but that they were dependent on the donors. They stated that this year, whilst the ODA grant had arrived in time, the USAID funds were still in the pipeline and it was still uncertain when they would arrive.



The administration said that they were grateful that this year's Cash-for-Food was intended not just for the original target area but also for the new northern areas now under their control. <sup>who?</sup> (They) now operated in five out of the twenty-nine provinces in Afghanistan. They were also operating in areas in two other provinces. A large proportion of the new northern area was mountainous terrain. They estimated that 90% of the people living there were now under their control. The remainder were controlled by other resistance groups with whom their contacts were either reasonable or good, though they had been having problems with some groups from <sup>who</sup> (two) of the political parties which make up the 7 party alliance.

The administration of the new area had been set up on the same lines as the administration in Afghanistan's original target area. Rather than sending in administrative officials from another area, they used local people and local commanders.

The total area now under the control of the area Commander is estimated to be over twice as large as the target area dealt with by Afghanistan's Cash-for-Food programme in 1985. The administration stated that a survey of the new area would be carried out by the local refugee committee, at the same time as they handed out this year's Cash-for-Food, to check on the numbers of civilians now under their control.

This would follow the same form as the census carried out in May 1985 in the original target area, prior to the first delivery of Cash-for-Food.

The administration estimated that there were 12,000 displaced families in the new area, of which 8,000 were in <sup>need.</sup> - how is this determined?

If this estimate is correct, then including the 10,000 families in the original target area, the total numbers of families in need in the whole area is in the region of 18,000. Taking the average number of people in each family as 7, the total number of people in need would be 127,000.

The area Commander said that the distribution of Cash-for-Food strengthened the hand of the administration in demonstrating to the people under their control their ability and willingness to help. This in turn would make it easier for the administration to promote schemes for self-help. They entirely agreed that such schemes were necessary.

#### F. Methods of Distributing Cash for Food

1987 was the third year in which Cash-for-Food has been distributed in this area of northeast Afghanistan through this administration. In discussions with the area Commander and his officials they envisaged no change in the methods of distribution which they considered to be the best way of helping the civilians in need under their control. Whilst their area of control has expanded, with a corresponding increase in the number of people who are their responsibility, they appear to have the personnel to handle this. As has been explained in previous reports, the following methods are used to distribute Cash-for-Food:-

- 1) At the administrative headquarters of the region covered by the programme there is a financial controller for the whole region and a leader responsible for the refugee or civilian population. These

which is it - internal refugee or civilian pop

two, together with the overall commander of the area, receive the cash and allocate it, using a master-list, to the financial head of each of the sub-areas (karagars), both in the original target area and the new areas. This is done on the basis of those in need and a sum is allocated to each head of family depending on the number of people in the family; account is also taken of other factors such as the accessibility of markets, e.g. the extra cost of transport or a middleman to buy the food for them. When the allocation between karagars has been done, either the financial head of the karagar is called by radio to the headquarters to receive his money or messengers are sent out to him from headquarters with the money; which method is used depends on the accessibility of the karagar, the number of responsible messengers available from other duties at headquarters, etc. The financial head of each karagar is then responsible for distributing the money to each head of family in need in his karagar on the basis of the karagar list. *criticism*

- 11) In a karagar where movement is easy, the heads of family will come to convenient distribution points to collect their money. In karagars where fighting is going on or where civilians are living in enemy-held areas, the money has to be taken to them by couriers, third parties or any other means possible. Even in a relatively accessible area it can take up to three or more weeks to contact each head of family, since they may be scattered in the mountains. As winter sets in, communication becomes increasingly difficult and delays are inevitable.

111) Each karagar financial head signs initially for the money he distributes and, in turn, each head of family signs or thumb-prints the karagar list to acknowledge receipt of his money. In 1985 the idea of ration cards was put forward for the original 10,000 families in need. However, given the unpredictable delays in receiving the Cash-for-Food, the administration felt that the issuing of ration cards at that stage might have lead the families to expect a regular hand out. The administration is aware that this is not possible at the moment. The monitors consider that ration cards are unlikely to be introduced in the foreseeable future.

G. Comment on the existing method of distributing Cash-for-Food

To repeat the comment from the previous reports on Cash for Food, the system in use seems as good and effective as can be devised in a situation where large numbers of people are scattered in various places, some more accessible than others, some in disputed and some in free areas. Obviously, it would be impossible to transport food into the target area in bulk and then on to the thousands of families dispersed over a wide area; apart from quickly attracting the attention of hostile forces, there would simply not be enough animals to transport the large quantities of food involved (as many as 5,000 horses to transport a month's food for all the families in need). Cash is the answer as long as food is available, which is the case in the target area. It is a flexible way of helping the population in need. Each head of family can decide what type of food he needs, where, when and

how it can be bought, without attracting attention to himself if he is in a regime-held area, and he can buy it in small quantities, since he is unlikely to have facilities to store very much. Of course, he could spend it on other items like clothing, but for a family with little or no means of support, food is bound to be the main priority. There is, of course, some risk that the karagar heads might pocket some of the money themselves, but word would soon get around that money had been received by the karagar and had not been distributed and a very strict code operates against cheating fellow-members of the community. In the case of the distribution of the cash, an additional safeguard is provided: the signature of each karagar financial head for the money has to be witnessed by an elder from the community who is independent of the administration.

#### H. Comments on accountability - system of spot-checks

From the beginning of the Cash-for-Food programme, Afghanistan has stressed the importance of a strict system of accountability. Obviously, donors want to be sure that their money is reaching the right people and is being used for the right purpose. Whilst obtaining receipts for the actual purchase of food in the market-place would be the ideal, practical considerations have to be taken into account. Firstly, a family's food for a month is not always bought at the same time or in the same place. So a number of receipts would be needed over a period. Secondly, not everybody can write or would understand what was required of them. Thirdly, as is the case this year, as many as 15,000 families would have to produce receipts which would then have to

be collected: a major task. Fourthly, and probably most important, a large percentage of families are only able to buy food from markets in enemy-held areas, or where militia operate, or where there are enemy spies. Asking for receipts would alert the enemy authorities and endanger the lives of the civilians concerned.

Afghanaid has been aware of the problem of accountability from the beginning, but it was only in 1987 that it was possible to check that the money had actually been received by the civilians in need and had been spent on food as intended. During the previous year, 1986, because of the late delivery of US funds to Afghanaid, the monitors had no time available to carry out spot-checks.

- System of Spot-Checks:

Afghanaid was aware that it was impossible to interview large numbers of the civilians in need to find out whether they had been receiving Cash-for-Food. It was therefore felt that the most practicable method would be for the monitors to carry out random spot-checks as they travelled through the area in the course of their a survey of the living conditions of those in need. To make sure that the checks were random and not influenced by the administration, the monitors decided where they would travel, subject to security considerations, and were accompanied only by their two guides. They informed the administration that they wished to carry out a survey, but did not tell them that they would be making spot-checks on the past distribution of money.

As this year's ODA grant would take some time to distribute, the spot-checks were intended to make sure that the previous Cash-for-Food allocation had been distributed in 1985 and 1986. Due to the limited time available for the monitors to carry out their survey and report their findings to Afghanistan, they decided to pick people at random as they travelled through the target area, but they tried to cover as much ground as was possible.

In the event, they interviewed a total of 32 heads of the displaced families about their living conditions and at the same time asked whether they had received any form of help from the administration. The interviews were carried out in 12 different locations on a journey within the target area of approximately 120 miles. Care was taken with these spot-checks not to ask leading questions. What the monitors tried to ascertain was whether they had received any financial or other form of help, and if so, when.

*where is question or check?*

The following is a table of the monitors' findings:

Money (Afghanis) received by heads of families interviewed

Family Head	1985	Early 1986	Late 1986
1	-	-	8,000
2	5,000	5,000	8,000
3	4,000	4,000	6,000
4	r(below)	r	4,000
5	r	4,000	4,000
6	4,500	4,500	r
7	6,000	4,000	3,000
8	4,000	6,000	10,000
9	3,000	4,000	4,000
10	r	4,000	4,000
11	3,000	3,000	4,000
12	r	r	r
13	4,000	4,000	5,000
14	4,500	4,500	7,000

15	3,000	3,000	4,000
16	r	4,000	5,000
17	4,000	4,000	6,000
18	3,500	3,500	4,500
19	-	-	5,000
20	5,000	5,000	8,000
21	r	r	r
22	4,000	4,000	6,000
23	5,000	5,000	5,000
24	4,500	4,500	6,000
25	3,000	3,000	5,000
26	4,000	r	5,000
27	4,000	4,000	5,000
28	5,000	5,000	5,000
29	r	4,000	5,000
30	4,000	4,000	6,000
31	5,000	5,000	8,000
32	4,500	4,500	6,500

Note: 'r' - received but unable to remember amount  
      '-' - not received

These sums tallied closely with the amounts that the administration claimed they had distributed to each family in need.

#### I. Other Foreign Aid Programmes in the Target Area

Apart from Afghanaid, two other European Private Voluntary Organisations, Gilde du Raide and the Swedish Committee, are involved in giving Cash-for-Food to the target area. To Afghanaid's knowledge, the total sum of money sent into the area in 1986 by the two organisations (approx. £200,000) is approximately a quarter of the total sent in by Afghanaid. A proportion of it was used in the target area and the balance was distributed to civilians under the control of a different political party with whom the administration is cooperating. After discussions with the administration and with the other two PVOs,



*on what basis ??*

Afghanaid is satisfied that the programmes complement each other and do not clash or duplicate in any way.

*Does it make sense for the AID Rep to finance 2 PDCs to go to the same area with same counterparts to do the same thing?*

J. Possibilities for simple development aid

From the beginning of Afghanaid's involvement in the target area in the northeast, it has aimed at moving towards a programme for self-sufficiency. In 1984, a year before Afghanaid started the Cash-for-Food programme, Western observers noticed when they visited the area that large areas of wheat were left unharvested and that few people were making any attempt to repair the damaged irrigation systems. Nobody felt safe working out in the open because of the danger of enemy attack. Dealing with the military situation was the administration's sole concern, and they had little time to deal with civilian matters. But as their military performance improved and they became better organised, they felt it vital that their civilian administration should be improved, and that more should be done to help the people in need.

This year, following discussions with the commander of the region and his top officials, and from the evidence of the monitors' survey and observations, it is clear that the area is now in a position to benefit from the introduction of development projects. The administration is keenly aware of the need to move towards a position in which they have a greater degree of self-sufficiency. They are confident that the area they control, which is mostly mountainous, is now safe enough to plan programmes for the improvement of agricultural production, livestock,

irrigation, communications, housing, health, and to set up cottage industries. It was clear to the monitors that this year improved air defence and successful military operations, combined with a further expansion of the area under their control, had put the administration into a position to do more for their civilians.

The following are the priorities for development aid which were put to the monitors by the Commander of the area and his top officials:-

1) Provision of seed and fertilisers

Seed is needed to grow the main staples: wheat, barley, and rice. Farmers are often forced to eat their seed for lack of other food and do not have the money to buy new seed. In many areas farmers have been forced by military activity to move to the higher valleys where the condition of the soil and irrigation systems may be poor, and the climate less favourable to the growing of certain crops. Often the ground has to lie fallow every second year.

Seed can be bought inside Afghanistan and it was suggested that in addition small quantities of improved seed might be brought in from abroad. Seed and fertiliser however are expensive in the local bazaars due to high transport costs (e.g. a bag of fertiliser in an enemy-held area costing 500 AFS could cost 1,200 AFS in the local bazaar).

Cash is needed to buy seed for the poorer farmers many of whom have substantial debts. The administration provided money for seed for farmers in three areas last year, which improved the harvests; as a

result people did not have to become refugees, and the administration were able to demonstrate their ability to help civilians (this money probably came from one of the two other PVOs operating programmes in the area).

To a lesser extent, money is also needed to buy vegetable seed. Because of military activity, some farmers have moved from the plains to the mountains bringing with them the know-how to grow vegetables. In these areas, where the weather is relatively cold, people were not accustomed to growing vegetables before the war. The result has been an improvement in their diet. However, the right type of seed is often not being used with the result that the quality and quantity of the crop is low. The administration is looking for seed for the following vegetables which can be grown in the area: onions, potatoes, turnips, carrots, radishes, pumpkins, cucumbers, tomatoes, and garlic. These seeds might have to be brought in from Pakistan.

11) The need for bullocks for ploughing and harvesting:

Many farmers have lost their animals as a result of military activity and do not have the money to buy bullocks for ploughing and harvesting; hence they are unable to grow crops. Money to buy bullocks from local bazaars will enable farmers to continue to cultivate their land.

111) Threshing machines:

Machines to speed up wheat threshing will make it less likely that the farmers will lose their crops at harvest time as a result of enemy

action. Threshing machines are available from local markets and a few available in each district would be useful.

iv) Improvement of the irrigation system:

Both the Commander and the local population were anxious to improve irrigation. In the areas the monitors visited there did not appear to be much permanent damage to the existing ancient but quite sophisticated irrigation system. But the administration estimated that cultivatable land could be increased by 10% if new irrigation channels were dug. Some efforts have already been made but there is a need for money to pay for the tools, drills, explosives, and labour to dig the channels and remove rock obstacles.

In addition to the digging of new channels and the repair of damaged ones, the administration suggested the provision of small water-driven pumps. The pumps they have in mind, which can raise water as much as 15 metres, can be purchased in Pakistan or from the local markets in Afghanistan. They are relatively light and are easily dismantled and transportable. These pumps would enable the people to develop new areas of fertile land.

The whole question of the ownership or tenancy of new lands is a difficult one - in particular, the apportionment of new land between the settled population and the internal refugees. But this is a matter for the local administration to sort out and would need to be taken into account in choosing an appropriate programme of assistance.

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v) The prevention and cure of animal and plant diseases:

There was no specialist help in the areas the monitors visited. The administration stated many farm and draught animals had died during the previous year due to disease. A veterinary programme, in their view, would be invaluable. Help was also needed with the treatment of plant diseases.

vi) Medical aid:

The administration stressed the need to improve medical facilities in the area. Although they had received some help from PVOs it was small in comparison with the scale of the problems they faced. They needed trained Afghan nurses and paramedics so that they did not have to rely on foreign personnel. At present the field hospitals only appear to be able to handle emergency surgery. There are few specialist doctors and no dentists.

They also urged the need for immunisation programmes, though they were aware of the difficulties in carrying these out. At present they face problems with malaria, measles, smallpox, TB, cholera, etc..

vii) The building of houses, schools, and hospitals:

Because a large number of people have been displaced but remain in the area there is a need for additional housing. The administration seek to discourage people from fleeing to Pakistan, but the problem is to accommodate them especially in the winter. For the building of houses for some at any rate of the internal refugees, local materials can be used. The major costs are for wood, as well as for the payment of carpenters and masons.

The administration also wants to build hospitals, which would have to be located in areas relatively safe from bombardment. Tunnels would need to be dug to evacuate patients in the event of enemy attack. They also want to build schools and equip them with basic materials, such as chairs, tables, books, etc.

viii) Cottage industry:

The administration hopes to break their dependence on outside clothing supplies by encouraging the development of small weaving and textile factories. Although there is plenty of local wool available, there is a need for machines to wash the wool, and the need for dyes. Personnel might need to be trained to use the machinery in Pakistan.

The curing of leather and the making of shoes, boots, belts, and bridles was also suggested. These products are expensive and difficult to transport from Pakistan. Experienced shoe-makers are available or could be brought in from the cities. Finance is needed for equipment, chemicals, and the start-up costs.

The revival of these traditional industries would help the employment situation.

ix) Improvements in agricultural equipment:

There is scope for improving most agricultural equipment, from steel ploughs to threshers.

x) Tunnel building:

The administration stated that they wanted to build tunnels for schools, hospitals, and air-raid shelters for the local population. Drills and explosives were needed. The Swedish Committee has already been involved with this.

xi) Road building/track improvement:

In the early years of the war the administration were not interested in building roads as they saw the difficult terrain as working to their advantage in defence against enemy attack. With a change in enemy tactics and with the administration's expanding area of control, there is now a need to improve their lines of communication. The monitors saw a good quality dirt road being constructed in one valley using prisoners taken from a garrison which had been captured the year before.

The administration also wants to improve the tracks over the mountain passes to make them easier for horses. They have the manpower for road and track building but need drills and explosives to break up large rocks, as well as some technical advice in building small bridges.

xii) Small hydro-electric plants:

The target area has many rivers which could drive small, simple turbines. It was suggested that the electricity could be used for hospitals, as well as the local population.

K. Comments on the development aid proposals

Afghanaid proposes to consider this list of requirements further in the context of the Village Assistance Programme. The pilot project which is currently underway in the border areas will help to identify the major problems in tackling proposals of this sort and the possibilities for an effective input of aid to meet the needs identified.

L. Monitors' survey

(a) Commentary

During the last three-years Afghanaid's programme to the Northeast of Afghanistan has principally been concerned with supplying Cash-for-Food to internal refugees: those civilians who have been driven from their homes and who have little or no means of support. The monitors' surveys carried out in 1985 and 1986 focused on the living conditions and needs of these internal refugees. During the fourth, and latest, phase in the summer of 1987, Afghanaid decided that the monitors should not only make a survey of



the internal refugees but also of the settled civilians to find out their living conditions and needs.

Whilst it is the displaced civilians who are in the situation of greatest need, it has been clear to Afghanaid that many of the settled civilians having been facing conditions of hardship due to the war. The administration has pointed out the need to help the settled civilians through simple development aid projects that may also have a spin-off effect for the displaced civilians in the form of employment, new land, housing, etc.. With this in mind, Afghanaid thought it necessary to check the living conditions and problems of the settled civilians to find out if they need help, and if so what kind of help.

The monitors carried out informal interviews at random with displaced and settled civilians during approximately 120 miles of travel within the target area. Below are their findings and some sample interviews.

(b) Displaced civilians

From the monitors' observations and conversations with displaced civilians in the target area, it was clear that whilst there may have been minor changes in the people's circumstances over the last three years they still face the same difficulties.

The main problems these people face are: little or no money to buy food; debt; little or no land to farm; unemployment; poor clothing; poor shelter; lack of medical facilities; and the danger of enemy attack.

The observations the monitoring team made during the latest phase in 1987 appear to be almost identical to those made in the summer of 1985 (see report on First Phase of Cash-for-Food programme 1985). The differences noted by the monitors in 1987 were, one, in shelter/housing, and, two, the movement of the people from one area to another.

#### Shelter/Housing:

There appeared to be fewer makeshift shelters than previously. Small huts/houses built of mud and stone were seen in many areas, often built into mountainsides. Wood is scarce and expensive, so some roofing was still made of cloth/tarpaulin. There appeared to be little room, a problem especially for large families, and a factor which would affect the women more than the men as they would stay at home most of the time.

Some civilians interviewed were living in settled civilians' houses, either due to a family/friendship relationship, or on a 'food and board in exchange for work' basis. The relationship appeared to be generally good between the displaced and settled civilians, though occasionally there are problems which are to be expected. Living in settled civilians' houses, the accommodation appeared to be cramped, often with a whole family living in one room. This, again, could be especially hard on the women.

Movement of people:

A large number of people interviewed had not been in their present accommodation for more than a year. Most of them had been driven from their homes between three and four years ago. But due to certain factors they had felt it necessary to move once, twice, or even three times since then. The main reason for moving appeared to be due to the need to try and find work. Men, on their own or with their families, said it was necessary to move in search of work. Some men had their families living in Kabul, with boys under 16 trying to find work, but they themselves were unable to visit due to fear of being conscripted into the armed forces.

Enemy attacks had forced some people to move to other areas. It was difficult to find out whether these attacks were specifically against civilians, or because it may have been thought that there were guerrillas operating or travelling through the areas.

It was clear from the monitors' observations and interviews with displaced civilians that whilst there had been a slight improvement in housing the main difficulty was still the lack of money to buy enough food, clothing, and other provisions.

The following are sample interviews with displaced civilians in the target area:

#### INTERVIEW WITH HASRAT SHAH

"I come from Dasht-i-Rawat village and have been a refugee for three and a half years. There are thirteen people in my family, one of my sons has been killed so I look after his family too. We went to Andarab and Khost first before coming back here.

Life is hard (here). I have a small shop. One son goes back to our land to try and work it in the summer. I have ten jeribs. I am too old to go back.

(The administration) has helped my family. Last year we got about (£20). We got about the same the year before. It's not very much. (Seven kilos) of wheat cost (£2) in winter.

As you can see, the ground is too rocky to plant anything. It is difficult even to keep animals. I have one donkey. In winter it gets very cold and there is much snow. We don't have enough blankets and clothes, however, I prefer to be here than in Pakistan. I would rather be in my country, helping my sons."

#### INTERVIEW WITH HAJI MOHAMMAD SHAH

"My family came to these high pastures three and a half months ago. We used to live in the village further lower down the valley, but we had to leave because there was so much bombing. Many people have left my village, but have stayed in (the area). This is our home. I have three jeribs of high land here which I owned before the war. There are many people now

living up here as it is much safer, although there is bombing here as we live near a pass.

There are twenty people in my family. I cannot live just off this land. This year the harvest is not so good. There was some rain but its been too cold and windy. Most of the young men are Mujahideen, but some have work as horsemen, carrying goods over the passes. It's dangerous with so many aeroplanes. Last year more than one hundred people were killed in the next village down the valley.

Next year the land will have to lie fallow. We would be able to grow something if we could afford to buy fertiliser. There is some available in the bazaar, but it is too expensive for us to buy. We grow mainly wheat and barley and have some sheep and goats.

We have no medical facilities at all. It is cold up here. We have a lot of sick children at the moment. We don't know what is wrong with them."

#### INTERVIEW WITH ALLUDERN

"I am a refugee from Wajawan in the Panjshir Valley. I left 3 years ago. Some people from our village went to Pakistan, some came here.

There are 12 in my family, but now I am the only one living here. My family went to Kabul 3 months ago. They went to work. My eldest son is 15 years old. Next year, he will have to leave Kabul to avoid being conscripted by the government. He visits me once a month. It's only 2 days travel from Kabul.

I work here helping a farmer grow and sell his water melons. He gives me board and lodging and pays me (£2) a month. (The administration) have helped my family. Last year they gave us (£32)."

(c) Settled civilians

As has been mentioned before, the people in most need are the displaced civilians, those who have been driven from their homes and have little or no means of support. Up until now, Afghanistan's programme to the north-east has been directed at these people. However, it has become clear from the monitors' latest survey that many of the settled civilians are facing hardship. Some of those interviewed pointed out that they were having difficulty in feeding their families and had many health problems.

From their observations as they travelled through the target area, the monitors obtained the general impression was that the harvests were reasonable and there was little or no enemy action in comparison with previous years. But whilst there appeared to be no threat of famine, it became clear as they moved from one area to another that the balance could easily be disturbed by poor rains and/or a resumption of enemy activity.

The monitors travelled mostly through areas which were relatively safe, ie - were not attacked regularly by the enemy. For the majority of settled civilians their livelihood depended on what they could grow on the land. But even before the war families could seldom survive solely by depending

on their land. Extra work either locally, in the cities, or abroad was necessary. The possibilities for this have been substantially cut back due to the war. The result is that the families appear to have little money to buy food to supplement what they grow. Also because of this it has proved difficult for farmers to buy new seed and fertilisers with the result that the crops and soil are becoming exhausted. Most of those interviewed were in debt.

Most of the villages visited had been bombed at some time during the war. Quite a few had been bombed in 1986. But it appeared that there had been no bombing during the eight months prior to the monitors' visit. What attacks had taken place the previous year had on the whole been fairly light. During the visit crops were being harvested. Most farmers interviewed stated that their yield might be reasonable that year, though some complained that wind and rain had damaged their crops. The majority of fields appeared to be in use, though some fields were having to be left fallow.

Many farmers complained that they were having problems with diseases which resulted in the death of animals. The animals affected most were cows, horses, donkeys, and mules. Most farmers said they had fewer animals compared to a few years ago. Apart from disease the reason given was that many had to sell some or all of their stock to obtain money to buy food. The sale or death of bullocks was a problem for a few farmers as they would have difficulty in farming their land. Most of the farming methods are centuries old, with modern practices still to make an appearance.

In the areas visited there appeared to be little problem with housing for the settled civilians, though there were some obviously new houses built to replace those damaged in bombing. Some areas were subject to more military attacks than others, with the result that some families were found living in partly destroyed houses.

Much of the civilians' complaint lay with the problems their children were facing. Illness and lack of medical facilities were problems often pointed out. Many of the children were said by their parents to be suffering from stomach problems. Malaria was another problem. One young boy of nine proudly showed the monitors the stump of his arm, lost in bombing the previous year.

There appeared to be few schools in the areas. The schools that did exist appeared to be simple affairs with little or no furniture and equipment. Approximately half of the schools mentioned in conversation were Madrasas, religious schools.

Levels of sanitation and cleanliness were poor by Western standards, something aid programmes in a time of war are unlikely to be able to rectify significantly. There appeared to be little understanding about basic precautions which might help prevent some illnesses. The monitors were often asked for medicine even when there appeared to be nothing wrong with the person.

The following are sample interviews with settled civilians in the target area:



INTERVIEW WITH ABDUL RAHIM

"My name is Abdul Rahim. I came to (this area) 35 years ago with my family. There wasn't enough land in Parian, where I was born. Although I have been living here most of my life, I still think of myself as a Panjshiri.

Life has always been difficult, but since the war started, things have got much worse. There is a lot of bombing in this valley. Last year, my wife was killed in a bombardment. I own 5 jeribs of land which has to feed my son, his wife, their 2 children and me. We grow wheat and barley mainly. Last year's harvest was good, but this year, we have had problems with rain and wind. I have had to borrow 30,000 Afghanis to buy food this year. I don't know how I'm going to give it back. I might have to sell some of my land.

Before the war we used to go to (the local town) to work, but now this is impossible. The government take young men for the army and it is too far for the old to travel.

I am happy that (the administration's Commander) has control of this area now because he has stopped the fighting between the villages. Before he came, there were many bad men with guns (from another political party). They would stop in a village and ask for a goat for supper. If you said you only had bread and tea, they would get very angry. Now (the Commander) is here, this has finished. (The administration has helped in other ways and I am lucky - I still have my land.

We live on tea, bread, milk, and yoghurt. Rice is too expensive for us. Most things have doubled in price since the war started.

We have many health problems. There are no doctors here so we don't know what to do when we become ill. We have a lot of malaria and stomach upsets in this village."

#### INTERVIEW WITH TAJ MOHAMMAD

"There are 11 people in my family, though both my sons are away fighting at the moment. We only have three jeribs of land, and because of this I am heavily in debt. I have to buy a lot of food. It is very difficult to feed so many people.

Why is it that you want to know about my problems? (Explanation by monitor)  
(The administration) has not helped us directly. But it is good the Commander is in control of this region. There was fighting between different groups but that has now stopped. And this area hasn't been bombed this year. But many people are in debt like me. It is very difficult to feed our children.

My brother has a job taking lapis lazuli to Pakistan and his money helps our family. I used to work in Kabul before the war but this is not possible now, they would take me into the army. This is the problem for many of the men in this area. They cannot do the work they did before. This makes life very difficult.

My children are often ill. We usually don't know what the problem is. Our neighbours lost two children last year. I think they died of malaria, but nobody was sure. I worry so much about our children. But we must thank God that we are still alive."

M. Conclusions and recommendations for future action

i) Whilst the position of civilians in the target area remains precarious, the overall situation in 1987 is better than in the previous year. Cash-for-Food is however still the primary need of the displaced civilians. Unless this programme continues, many of these civilians will have no alternative but to attempt the difficult journey to Pakistan, thus further depopulating the area and adding to the burdens on the Pakistan Government and the UNHCR. The Cash-for-Food programme therefore must continue.

ii) The present methodology seems right. Cash rather than food must be taken in, since it remains impractical to transport food. The administrative system in the area has shown itself capable of handling these large sums of cash, of getting it to the people in need, and of accounting for the money. This has been confirmed by the monitoring teams and by the spot-checks that have been carried out.

iii) It is important that the Cash-for-Food programme should continue to cover the new northern area as well as the original target area.

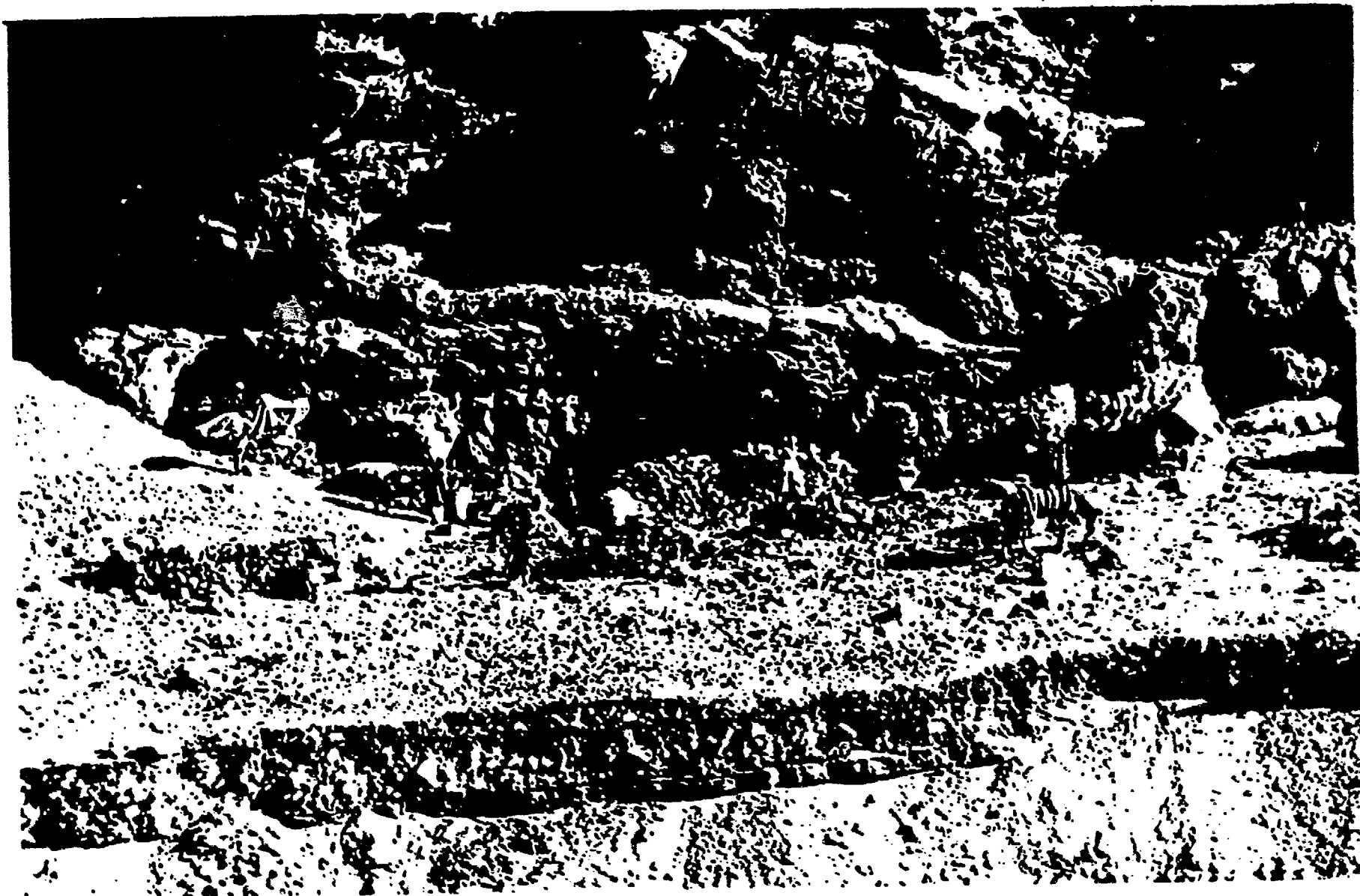
Aghanaid estimates that there are at least 5,000 families in need in the northern area (WB. 8,000 families in the administration's estimate), on top of the 10,000 in the original target area. An administrative system has now been set up in this new area and the findings of a survey to ascertain the exact number of civilians in need should now have been

carried out by the administration, the details of which should be available soon.

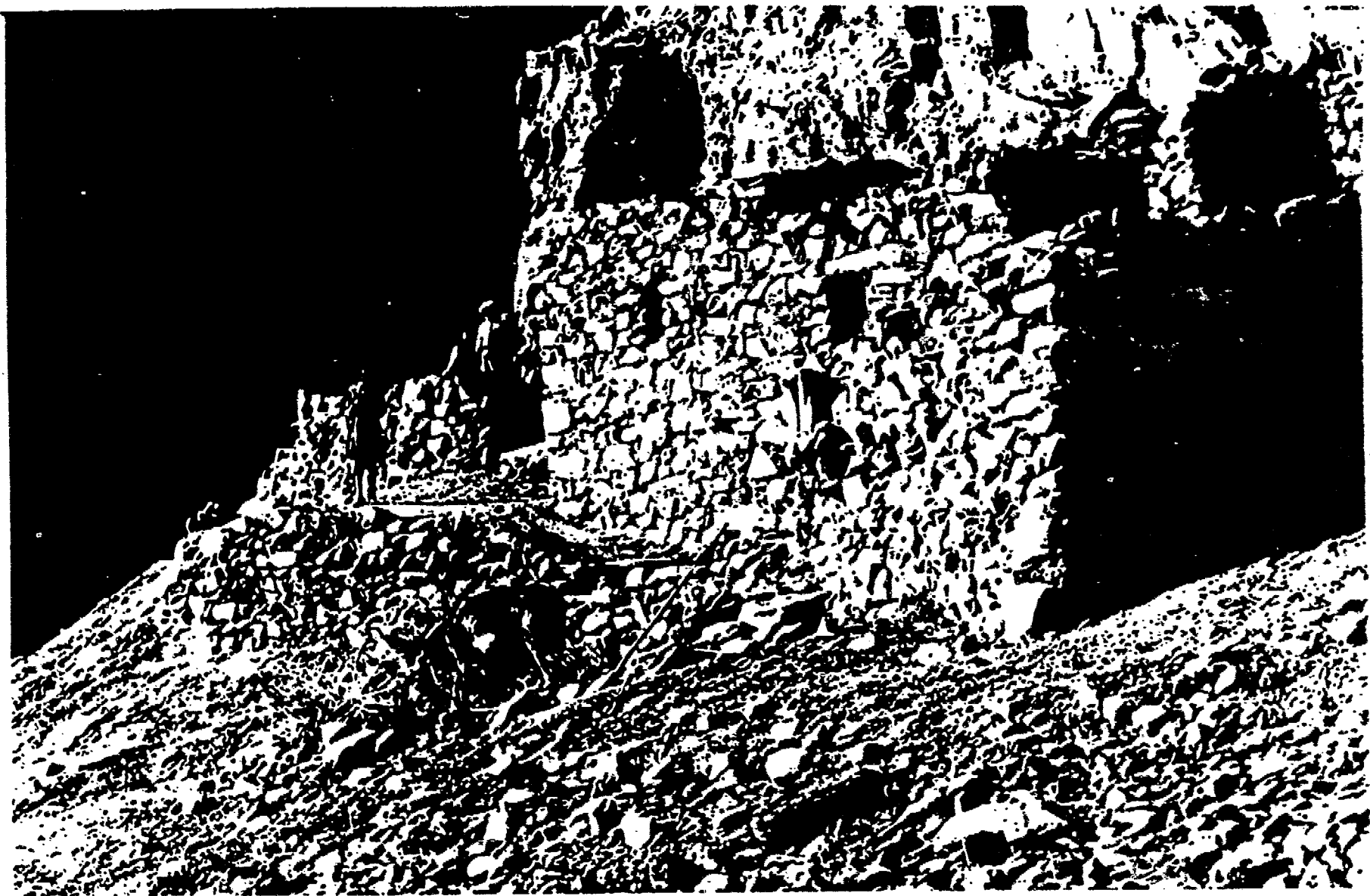
iv) At the same time, measures for self-help must now be promoted as far as this is possible in the target area. Since this is an agricultural area and the monitors' observations show that an improvement of agriculture is possible, these measures, to start with at any rate, are likely to be primarily agricultural. The measures will have to be simple, since they have to be implemented in war conditions and largely unsupervised; nothing bulky can be carried into the area, so maximum use has to be made of whatever is in Afghanistan and can be bought for cash, which Afghanaid hope to provide. Detailed proposals will be worked out in the light of experience gained from the Village Assistance Programme and other further discussion with representatives of the administration of their list of requirements.

v) Other measures of self-help must also be studied. In particular, Afghanaid must cooperate with other Agencies, which specialise in these fields, to increase the present low level of medical and educational help to the target area to add to the food and agricultural programmes which Afghanaid will hope to provide. Cooperation between the PVOs involved is vital, and Afghanaid is optimistic that the possibilities for coordinated programmes exist. This target area in the northeast was one of the most prosperous and important in Afghanistan before the war and the preservation of its life during the war will be of considerable significance to post-war Afghanistan.

vi) On a practical level, it is essential that, for future programmes, funds should be taken into the target area early in the summer. This allows the monitors time to carry out their surveys and spot-checks on the distribution of Cash-for-Food and avoids the risk of being trapped inside Afghanistan by the closure of the passes: the season during which the monitors can operate is fairly short. Whilst the ODA funds were received early enough in 1987, to enable the monitoring programme to be carried out fully, the USAID funds arrived late and had to be handled separately, with the result that the monitor sent in with the money was caught by the onset of winter.



The cave shelters of displaced civilians in the target area



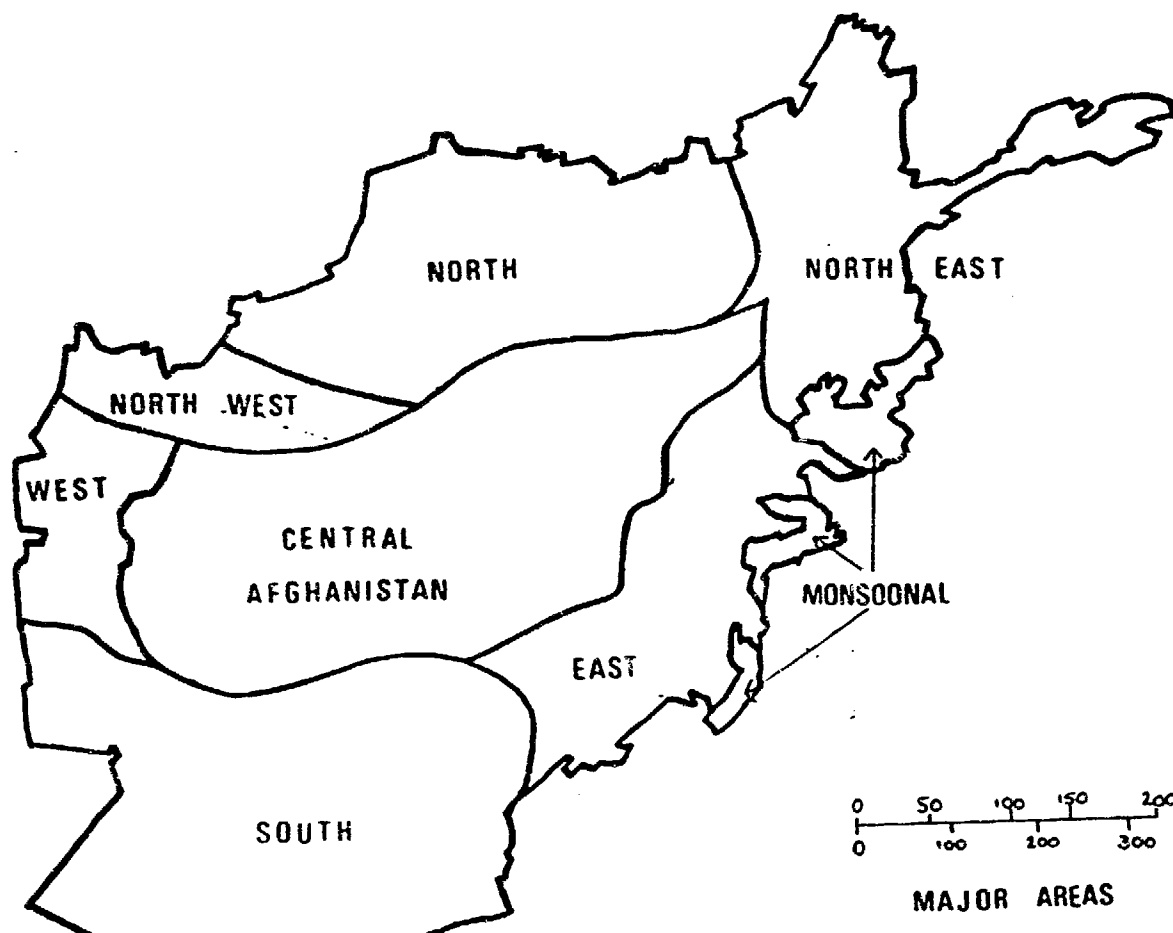
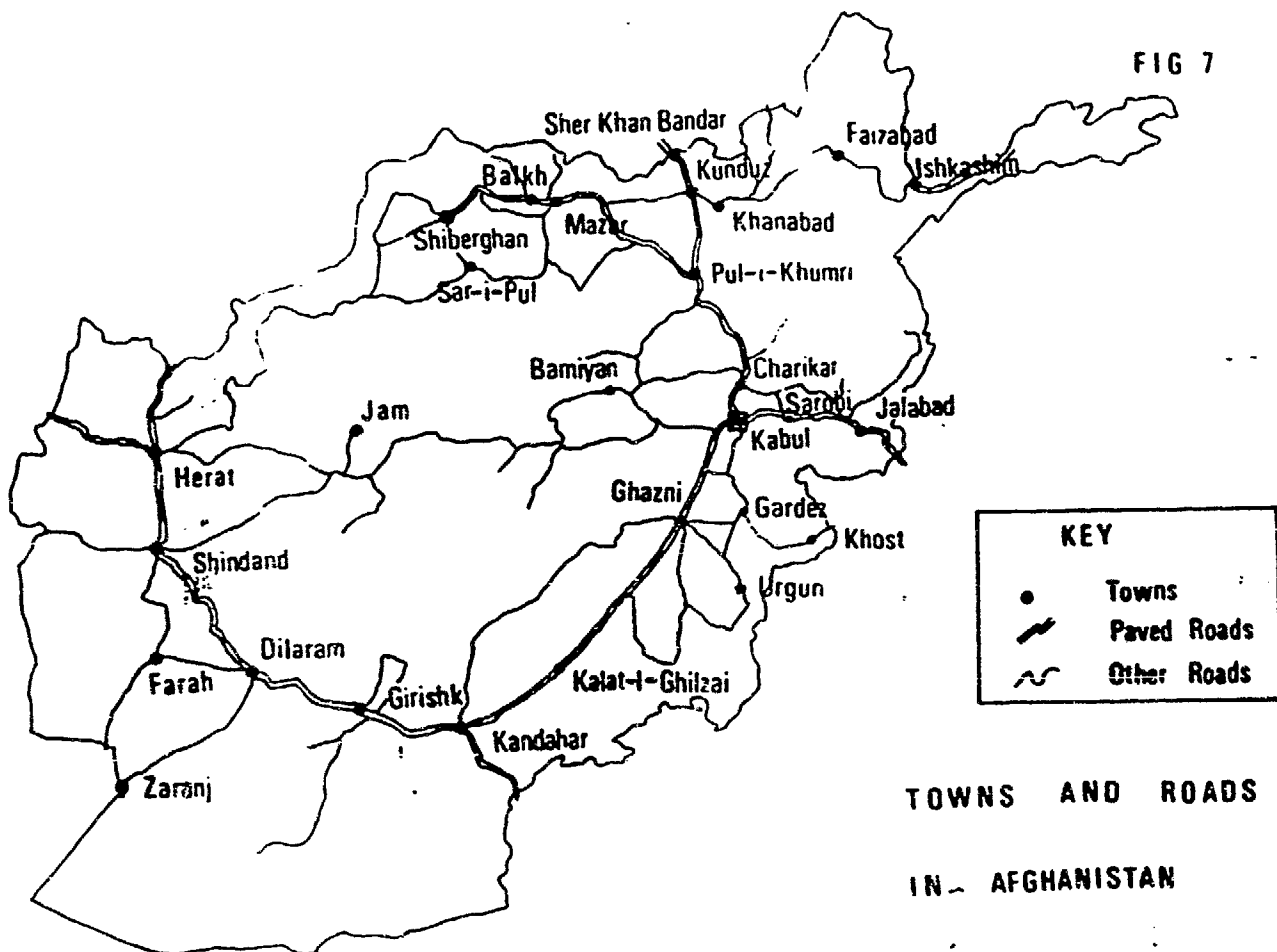
Displaced civilians' housing in target area

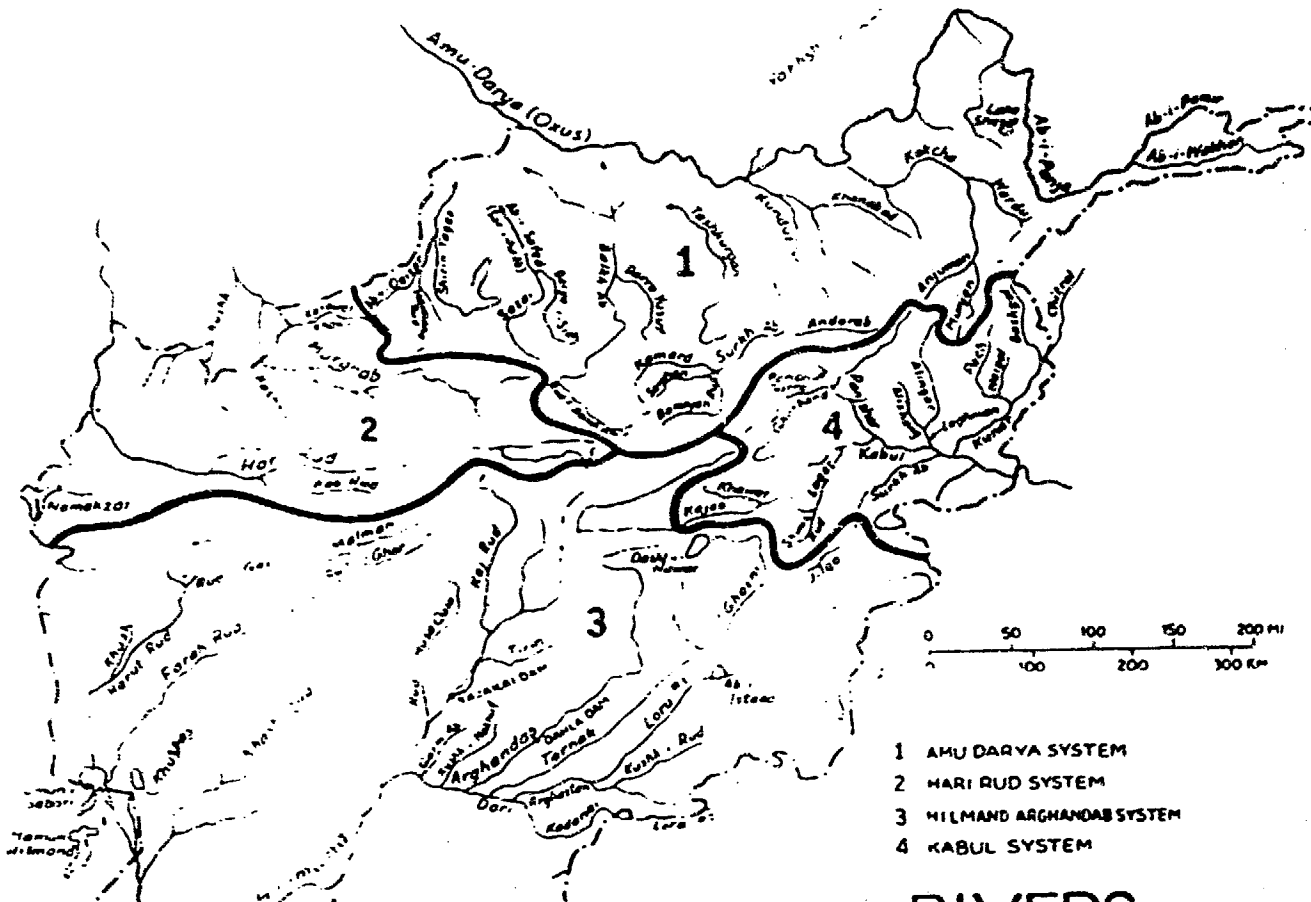
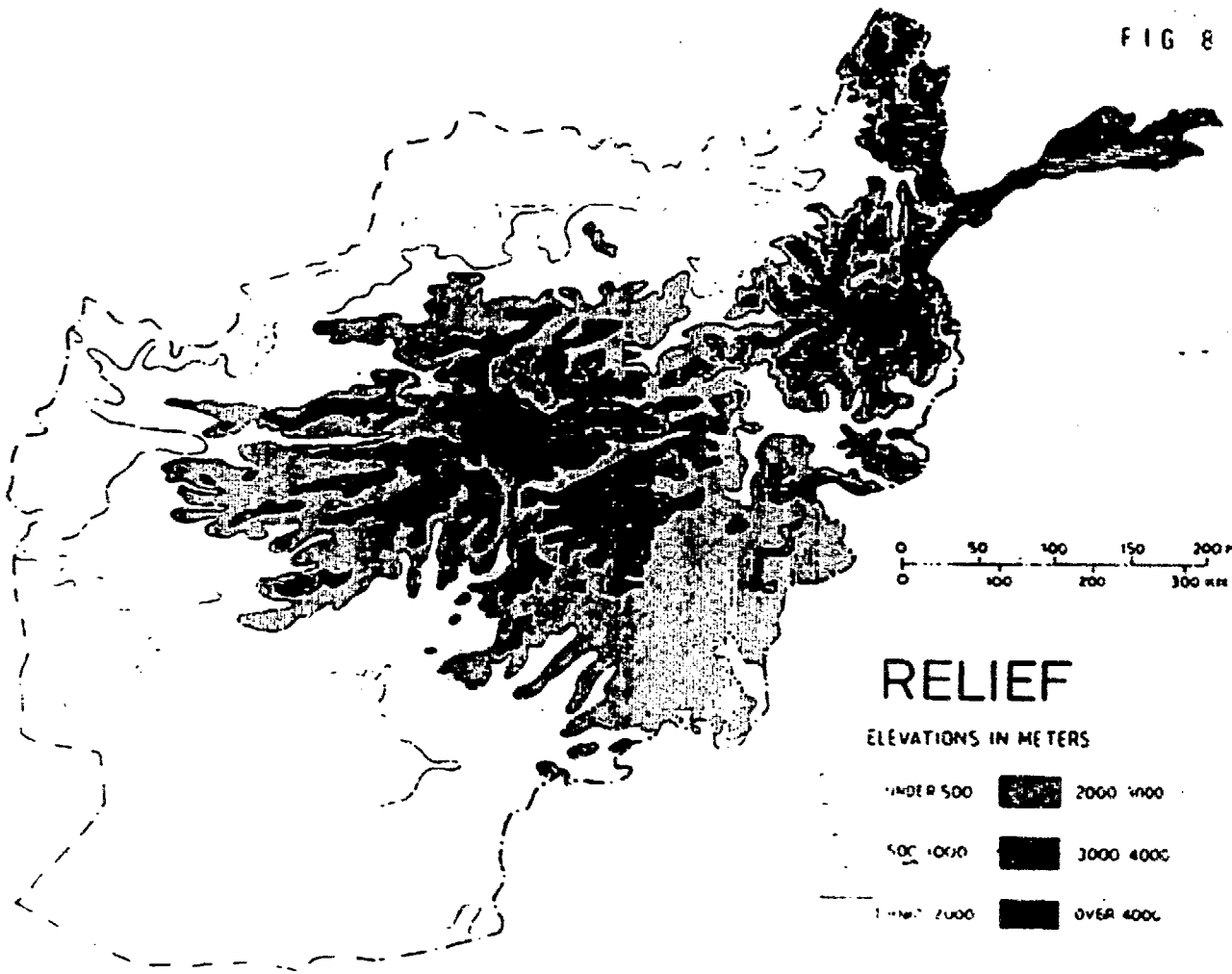




terraced fields which were being farmed in the target area

FIG 7





Document 02322, which was acquired after this collection went to press and which chronologically follows document 02013, appears in numerical order at the end of the microfiche.